

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the instant application:

What is claimed is:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of negotiating an electronic commerce (e-commerce) transaction for the sale of a selected good comprising the steps of:

identifying an asking price for the selected good;

retrieving from memory merchant business objectives (MBOs) and consumer privacy rules (CPRs), said MBOs ~~specifying incentive information corresponding to a proposed exchange of consumer information~~ comprising a series of merchant-specified rules specifying a plurality of cash or cash-equivalent incentives offered to a consumer in exchange for consumer-specific information, and said CPRs ~~specifying asking prices corresponding to said proposed exchange of consumer information~~ comprising a series of consumer-specified rules specifying a minimum cash or cash-equivalent incentive for which a consumer will exchange specific items of consumer-specific information;

comparing said MBOs to said CPRs to determine if an agreement can be reached for the sale of the selected good with an incentive based upon said proposed exchange of consumer information, wherein the comparing is performed by a negotiation engine configured to determine whether an agreement can be reached based on the comparison of said MBOs and CPRs and without requiring interaction with either a merchant or a consumer or between the merchant and consumer; and

consummating said e-commerce transaction for the sale of the selected good with said incentive if in said comparing step it is determined that an agreement can be reached.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, said consummating step further comprising:

providing agreed upon e-commerce transaction information to an e-commerce processing system for processing said e-commerce transaction.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, said comparing step further comprising:
receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted incentive.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, said comparing step further comprising:
receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted asking price
corresponding to said proposed exchange of consumer information.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, said comparing step further comprising:
adjusting said incentive consistent with said MBOs.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1, said comparing step further comprising:
adjusting said asking price consistent with said CPRs.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said incentive is selected from the
group consisting of a discount, an additional good, cash, and a cash equivalent.
8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein said consumer privacy rules further
specify an acceptable incentive type for the exchange of selected consumer
information.
9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said comparing step is biased in favor
of a merchant.
10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said comparing step is biased in favor
of a consumer.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of negotiating an electronic commerce (e-commerce) transaction for the sale of a selected good comprising the steps of:
identifying an asking price for the selected good;

retrieving from memory merchant business objectives (MBOs), said MBOs ~~specifying incentive information corresponding to a proposed exchange of consumer information~~ comprising a series of merchant-specified rules specifying a plurality of cash or cash-equivalent incentives offered to a consumer in exchange for consumer-specific information;

receiving consumer privacy rules (CPRs), said CPRs ~~specifying asking prices corresponding to said proposed exchange of consumer information~~ comprising a series of consumer-specified rules specifying a minimum cash or cash-equivalent incentive for which a consumer will exchange specific items of consumer-specific information;

comparing said MBOs to said CPRs to determine if an agreement can be reached for the sale of the selected good with an incentive based upon said proposed exchange of consumer information, wherein the comparing is performed by a negotiation engine configured to determine whether an agreement can be reached based on the comparison of said MBOs and CPRs and without requiring interaction with either a merchant or a consumer or between the merchant and consumer; and

consummating said e-commerce transaction for the sale of the selected good with said incentive if in said comparing step it is determined that an agreement can be reached.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, said consummating step further comprising:
providing agreed upon e-commerce transaction information to an e-commerce processing system for processing said e-commerce transaction.

13. (Original) The method of claim 11, said comparing step further comprising:
receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted incentive.

14. (Original) The method of claim 11, said comparing step further comprising:
receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted asking price
corresponding to said proposed exchange of consumer information.
15. (Original) The method of claim 11, said comparing step further comprising:
adjusting said incentive consistent with said MBOs.
16. (Original) The method of claim 11, said comparing step further comprising:
adjusting said asking price consistent with said CPRs.
17. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said incentive is selected from the
group consisting of a discount, an additional good, cash, and a cash equivalent.
18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein said consumer privacy rules further
specify an acceptable incentive type for the exchange of selected consumer
information.
19. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said comparing step is biased in favor
of a merchant.
20. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said comparing step is biased in favor
of a consumer.
21. (Withdrawn) A method of configuring merchant business objectives comprising:
identifying an item of consumer information desired by a merchant;
specifying at least one incentive for said item of consumer information to be
offered to a consumer in exchange for said item of consumer information; and

storing an indication of said item of consumer information and said corresponding incentive in a data store.

22. (Withdrawn) A method of configuring consumer privacy rules comprising:

identifying an item of consumer information which a consumer will provide to a merchant;

specifying at least one incentive for said item of consumer information in exchange for which said consumer will provide said item of consumer information to a merchant; and

storing said item of consumer information and said minimum incentive in a data store.

23. (Currently Amended) A privacy negotiation system for negotiating an electronic commerce transaction involving a transfer of selected consumer information items, said system comprising:

a merchant objectives data store comprising merchant-specified rules for offering incentives to a consumer during said electronic commerce transaction, wherein said rules specify a plurality of cash or cash-equivalent incentives offered to a consumer in exchange for consumer-specific information, and wherein said incentives are conditioned upon said transfer of said selected consumer information items from said consumer to a merchant;

a negotiation engine communicatively linked to said merchant objectives data store, wherein said negotiation engine mediates between said merchant and said consumer ~~to conclude said electronic commerce transaction~~ by comparing the merchant-specified rules with consumer-specified rules specifying a minimum cash or cash-equivalent incentive for which a consumer will exchange specific items of consumer-specific information and determining whether a merchant-consumer agreement can be reached based on the comparison, the determination being made without requiring

interaction with either a merchant or a consumer or between the merchant and consumer;
and

a merchant agent for negotiating said electronic commerce transaction on behalf of said merchant, said merchant agent communicating with said negotiation engine and said merchant privacy rules data store.

24. (Original) The system of claim 23, further comprising:

a consumer privacy rules data store comprising rules for disclosing said selected consumer information items; and

a consumer agent for negotiating said electronic commerce transaction on behalf of said consumer, said consumer agent communicating with said negotiation engine and said consumer privacy rules data store.

25. (Original) The system of claim 24, wherein said consumer privacy rules data store includes said selected consumer information items.

26. (Original) The system of claim 23, further comprising:
a transaction processing system.

27. (Currently Amended) A machine readable storage, having stored thereon a computer program having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

identifying an asking price for a selected good;

retrieving from memory merchant business objectives (MBOs) and consumer privacy rules (CPRs), said MBOs ~~specifying incentive information corresponding to a proposed exchange of consumer information~~ comprising a series of merchant-specified rules specifying a plurality of cash or cash-equivalent incentives offered to a consumer in exchange for consumer-specific information, and said CPRs ~~specifying asking prices~~

corresponding to said proposed exchange of consumer information comprising a series of consumer-specified rules specifying a minimum cash or cash-equivalent incentive for which a consumer will exchange specific items of consumer-specific information;

comparing said MBOs to said CPRs to determine if an agreement can be reached for the sale of the selected good with an incentive based upon said proposed exchange of consumer information, wherein the comparing is performed by a negotiation engine configured to determine whether an agreement can be reached based on the comparison of said MBOs and CPRs and without requiring interaction with either a merchant or a consumer or between the merchant and consumer; and

consummating said e-commerce transaction for the sale of the selected good with said incentive if in said comparing step it is determined that an agreement can be reached.

28. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 27, said consummating step further comprising:

providing agreed upon e-commerce transaction information to an e-commerce processing system for processing said e-commerce transaction.

29. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 27, said comparing step further comprising:

receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted incentive.

30. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 27, said comparing step further comprising:

receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted asking price corresponding to said proposed exchange of consumer information.

31. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 27, said comparing step further comprising:

adjusting said incentive consistent with said MBOs.

32. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 27, said comparing step further comprising:

adjusting said asking price consistent with said CPRs.

33. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 27, wherein said incentive is selected from the group consisting of a discount, an additional good, cash, and a cash equivalent.

34. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 33, wherein said consumer privacy rules further specify an acceptable incentive type for the exchange of selected consumer information.

35. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 27, wherein said comparing step is biased in favor of a merchant.

36. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 27, wherein said comparing step is biased in favor of a consumer.

37. (Original) A machine readable storage, having stored thereon a computer program having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

identifying an asking price for a selected good;

retrieving from memory merchant business objectives (MBOs), said MBOs ~~specifying incentive information corresponding to a proposed exchange of consumer information~~ comprising a series of merchant-specified rules specifying a plurality of cash

or cash-equivalent incentives offered to a consumer in exchange for consumer-specific information;

receiving consumer privacy rules (CPRs), said CPRs ~~specifying asking prices corresponding to said proposed exchange of consumer information~~ comprising a series of consumer-specified rules specifying a minimum cash or cash-equivalent incentive for which a consumer will exchange specific items of consumer-specific information;

comparing said MBOs to said CPRs to determine if an agreement can be reached for the sale of the selected good with an incentive based upon said proposed exchange of consumer information, wherein the comparing is performed by a negotiation engine configured to determine whether an agreement can be reached based on the comparison of said MBOs and CPRs and without requiring interaction with either a merchant or a consumer or between the merchant and consumer; and

consummating said e-commerce transaction for the sale of the selected good with said incentive if in said comparing step it is determined that an agreement can be reached.

38. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 37, said consummating step further comprising:

providing agreed upon e-commerce transaction information to an e-commerce processing system for processing said e-commerce transaction.

39. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 37, said comparing step further comprising:

receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted incentive.

40. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 37, said comparing step further comprising:

receiving a counter-offer, said counter-offer specifying an adjusted asking price corresponding to said proposed exchange of consumer information.

41. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 38, said comparing step further comprising:
adjusting said incentive consistent with said MBOs.
42. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 38, said comparing step further comprising:
adjusting said asking price consistent with said CPRs.
43. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 38, wherein said incentive is selected from the group consisting of a discount, an additional good, cash, and a cash equivalent.
44. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 43, wherein said consumer privacy rules further specify an acceptable incentive type for the exchange of selected consumer information.
45. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 38, wherein said comparing step is biased in favor of a merchant.
46. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 38, wherein said comparing step is biased in favor of a consumer.
47. (Withdrawn) A machine readable storage, having stored thereon a computer program having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:
identifying an item of consumer information desired by a merchant;

specifying at least one incentive for said item of consumer information to be offered to a consumer in exchange for said item of consumer information; and

storing an indication of said item of consumer information and said corresponding incentive in a data store.

48. (Withdrawn) A machine readable storage, having stored thereon a computer program having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

identifying an item of consumer information which a consumer will provide to a merchant;

specifying at least one incentive for said item of consumer information in exchange for which said consumer will provide said item of consumer information to a merchant; and

storing said item of consumer information and said minimum incentive in a data store.